

# **DRAFT Rapid Transit Steering Committee Meeting Minutes**

## **EOB Auditorium**

**September 30, 2014 4:00 – 6:00 pm**

### **Voting Members In-Attendance**

Joe Beach; Andrew Gunning; Arthur Holmes, Jr.; John Schlichting; Dan Wilhelm; Mark Winston.

### **Non-Voting Members**

Tom Autrey; Carolyn Biggins; Joana Conklin; Sean Egan; Gary Erenrich; Bruce Johnston; Barry Kiedrowski; Rick Kiegel; Stacy Leach; Greg Ossont; Jonathan Parker; Tom Pogue; Al Roshdieh; Frank Spielberg; Tom Street; Emil Wolanin.

### **Other Attendees**

Nancy Abeles; Jamaica Arnold; Scott Giering; James Hamre; Celesta Jurkovich; Richard Levine; Harriet Quinn; Stephen B. Miller; Allen Myer; Kyle Nembhard; Paul Seder; Francine Waters; David Winstead; James Zepp.

### **Introductions and Welcome**

Arthur Holmes, Jr. called the meeting to order at 4:07 pm. The meeting started with the attendees introducing themselves.

### **Approval of Minutes for July 29, 2014.**

The minutes were tentatively approved with changes. Mark Winston said he had some changes to make to the minutes, and wanted to discuss them at a different time. The committee agreed to approve the minutes with the understanding that Mr. Winston's changes would be made later.

### **Project Status Updated**

#### **Purple Line**

Jamie Kendrick from MTA presented this update. MTA is continuing with the RFP. It was released to the 4 short listed teams in July and is due January 2015. Issued one addendum and are working on a 2<sup>nd</sup> one for December. Construction is anticipated to start next fall. State fund are lined up. Montgomery County is paying for the Bethesda South entrance, the Capital-Crescent Trail, and the Silver Spring Green Trail, which will be paid for over 5 years. There are some outstanding community issues, but there was no interest in discussing these at the meeting.

### **Corridor Cities Transitway**

Rick Kiegel from MTA presented this update. The Consultants have delivered 15% design plan on August 15, 2014. This was an important milestone because it allows MTA to finish the environmental impact studies. These studies will be completed in the next 6 weeks. MTA is targeting a 30% design completion by August 30, 2015. At this point, MTA will be able to complete FONSI. Between now and next August, MTA will be working on project delivery, structures, stations, etc. The project is fully funded for preliminary design, but there is no money for construction at this time. The goal is to have funding by Spring 2018.

There are three AACs in the 9 mile corridor. They have met 4 times, and things seem to be going very well. Mr. Kiegel said they are moving through the various design elements and disciplines.

Frank Spielberg asked if there are any considerations in the contracting aspect that would impact how the system works. Rick Kiegel said they are looking at MD 355 at Shady Grove Road. There are no direct contracts that will benefit all.

Mr. Spielberg said it would be nice if the vehicles could fit everywhere. Mr. Kiegel said they are using standard sizes for platform heights. How the project is delivered would decide the type of vehicle used.

Mark Winston asked that they put into the MTA's thinking some consistency in vehicle and station design. This may be of significant for RTS. Mr. Winston would like to see some thought given now and more coordination. It would make sense to view the CCT as a part of RTS. Mr. Kiegel said MTA will do that. Al Roshdieh said these discussions have happened at other meetings. Director Holmes stated that compatibility is important. Mr. Spielberg said platform height is important.

### **Finance Work Group Update**

Joe Beach gave this presentation. He was moved up on the Agenda due to a scheduling conflict. Mr. Beach gave a brief of the work the Finance Group has been doing over the summer. The Group is meeting in early November and one of the County's advisors will be assisting them. Mr. Beach couldn't get into the details, but you never had all the money at the start of a project.

Mr. Winston said it's fair to say construction will not begin until full financing for the corridor has been worked out. Director Holmes agrees with Mr. Winston. Andrew Gunning offered to help out Mr. Beach.

## **Citizen Advisory Committee Plan**

The CACs went live on September 26, 2014. There have been comments for the Steering Committee and the Community, and Director Holmes is sure there will be more comments.

Joana Conklin took over the discussion by talking about some of the Steering Committee comments. The first one she addressed with the dividing line on MD 29 at New Hampshire. This is not really a dividing line for the study, but just for the CAC.

Another issue is the selection of CAC along the dividing line. There is some flexibility. There are also some different points of view about the at large members. It's being limited to a 1:3 ratio. Ms. Conklin feels it's important to include the at large members, but the large representation should be from those most impacted.

The web page went live on Friday. The whole site has been redone. November 11, 2014 is the deadline for nominations, with the plan to kick off in January 2015.

A resident asked how the CAC forms are getting out to the public. Tom Pogue explained that the prime means is a direct mailing to all residents in the corridor, all civic associates and chambers (all 6). In addition to the direct mailing, the County is using advertising, social media, and Regional Service Centers.

A resident asked how do Civic Centers get the nominations forms. Mr. Pogue asked interested people to give the forms to their civic president. MCDOT is helping residents who don't know who the president is. MCDOT will also forward any form they receive.

Dan Wilhelm said it might be good to provide maps so residents know the boundaries. Ms. Conklin said the Communities for Transit have been helping with the updates.

A resident asked if Government Institutions are being taken into account. Ms. Conklin said they are and businesses will be sending their nomination forms to the MCDOT.

## **MDOT FY2015-2020 Consolidated Transportation Program: Rapid Transit Projects**

The State's Tour of Consolidated Transportation (the Road Show) is happening October 2, 2014 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of the Council Office Building.

Ms. Conklin discussed the DRAFT Consolidated Transportation Program FY 2015 -2020. It is broken down by project. This presentation can be found on the RTS web site. No funds are shown because they are County funded. Generally County funded projects don't show the funds (except the Purple Line). This brought up a discussion by the committee being a bit disheartened by the lack of funding for rapid transit projects.

### **Follow-up on MD 97 Issues**

Director Holmes discussed the concerns Olney residents have with the RTS presentations. Part of this concern comes from a misunderstanding. The impression was given that we would be taking from businesses in Olney. That is not correct. The presentation just said these are some alternatives not that it was the preferred alternatives. The local businesses have written in stating they do not want the BRT in Olney. MCDOT has responded to the businesses and interest groups explaining that these were just preliminary studies, not plans.

Mr. Winston said that hopefully it's been instructed as to how these studies are conducted. Director Holmes said the studies have been interpreted wrong and that information that comes out in a briefing will be vetted through the County

### **BRT Scopes of Work/Project**

Barry Kiedrowski discussed the two types of studies

#### **Route 97 and Route 586 BRT**

MD 97 and MD 586 are project planning studies – it will progress into and environmental document: planning – design – ROW – construction acquisition.

MD 586 has alternatives:

- No build
- TSM Queue Jumps

MD 97 has 5 alternatives being studied. Mr. Winston asked if there is any thought to expand to Howard County. Mr. Kiedrowski said it's possible and Howard County is looking into BRT.

#### **Route 355 and Route 29**

MD 355 and MD 29 are corridor studies. The end project is a decision making document. SHA needs to establish a purpose and need for the projects. At this time SHA is getting Consultants and preparing for CAC involvement.

Mr. Spielberg asked if it was going through the college. Mr. Kiedrowski said Wheaton to Rockville service area could be expanded. Gary Erenrich said no physical improvements are planned between Rockville and the College.

Mr. Winston asked if SHA is taking into account the County's Functional Master Plan. Mr. Kiedrowski said it's being taking into account. Mr. Erenrich said one of the alternative studies is a good mirror.

Mr. Winston asked if the studies are moving forward with plans for federal funding. Mr. Kiedrowski said yes.

Mr. Wilhelm asked with regards to ridership, is SHA looking at how it will work with local buses and transfers. Mr. Kiedrowski said yes.

Mr. Kiegel said they are looking at individual routes to work with RTS and will come up with alternatives to work with Metro. There are not a lot of changes proposed. Jamaica Arnold said the COG model is used to look at all this. Tom Street asked if there is any analysis of moving pick up sites closer to potential riders and how that would affect ridership (feeder lines). Mr. Winston asked if Ride On would be reworked to go deeper into areas. Mr. Kiegel said there are no studies that have looked at this in models. Mr. Kiegel said on MD 586 and MD 97 there are no wholesale changes to Ride On to create a new plan.

The discussion continued regarding the studies with regarding to ridership predictions and getting the maximum utilization of the system for the money

Mr. Roshdieh went back to the environment process. There are been a lot of discussion regarding MD 586 and MD 97. MD 586 is going through a NEPA process. MD 355 and MD 29, the County and SHA decided they did not want to go through the process, but didn't want to lose the possibility of federal grants, and since these are State Highways, they do need to go through some environmental studies, but not to the NEPA level. Director Holmes added to this by saying the corridors have to go through the Maryland environmental process.

Mr. Winston has questions about the Federal Funding Track- there won't be any federal funds – and wants to understand what is going on with this. Director Holmes said marching orders are different for MD 355 and MD 29 from MD 589 and MD 97. Mr. Kiedrowski said it's ready to be designed, acquire and constructed. Director Holmes said with regards to Ride On servicing that Phil McLaughlin needs to be brought in.

A resident asked how you plan with SHA for 20, 30 years? Too many things can change and you need to be flexible. You need to do it incrementally. Director Holmes said there is a planning process that makes assumptions of 20/30 years. Director Holmes wanted to discuss this off-line.

Another resident asked where the end stop is in Wheaton. Where are the people going to go at Wheaton Plaza. Director Holmes said they would be getting on the METRO. The resident said this is another system that is grossly inadequate.

## **Metro Bus Priority Corridor Updates**

Jim Hamre from WMATA gave an update. The study is to implement:

- Limited stop
- Improve services
- Benefit the most riders in the time
- Improve bus services for now and existing ridership

This is a comprehensive strategy. METRO Board adopted it in 2006 and the final study was completed in 2014. The corridors align with the BRT corridors. Improvements have been done to 5 of the 7. The C line is the next line to be worked on. The Z line study was just completed.

Mr. Roshdieh asked what the net increase is for the system. Mr. Hamre said 7 million increase in ridership.

Mr. Hamre presentation gave a breakdown of the costs. MC is a mature network. WMATA is able to respond as soon as funds and buses are there. New bus lines have been added for the Howard University Area. WMATA is completing NEPA for the trolley car line.

Metroway is a 5-mile BRT corridor between Pentagon City and Braddock Road. The City of Alexandria completed their section in the summer of 2014. Ridership has increase by 50% with no loss of ridership on the local service buses. Most of the planned development is still being built.

David Hauck asked about trip times before and after and at rush hour and non-rush hour. Mr. Hamre said there is a 25% increase peak to base, and that this can increase once on-board payment is available.

A resident asked how you handle a breakdown on the BRT system. Mr. Hamre said you have to single track the BRT.

## **Bus Demonstration Work Group Update**

David Hauck started his presentation with a video of the RTS bus at the Montgomery County Fair. Bill Griffin was able to get a BRT bus that was being shipped to Ft. Collins for training. The bus and two tables were set up next to the main ticket entrance with photos of the Eugene Oregon Station. About 4,000 people came to interact with staff and volunteers, but more visited the bus. There was a press event on the 4<sup>th</sup> ay. It was a lot of work, but most people who came to the exhibit had no idea what BRT was and the staff/volunteers were able to educate them. Director Holmes thanked Mr. Hauck for his time and the work that was involved with the demonstration.

### **Meeting Calendar**

The next meeting is October 28, 2014 in the Rockville Public Library at 4:00 pm. This meeting was later cancelled.